

Energy Crisis in the World
Or
The World on the Brink of an Oil Crisis
Or
Harnessing New sources of Energy

Essay No. 01

In an industrially advanced world of today, the demand for energy is increasing day by day. Energy is required to run our factories and machines, to run our planes, trains, cars, and buses, to drive our ships and submarines, to make the wheel move. The major sources of energy so far have been coal and oil. But with the passage of time, coal and oil are bound to be used up. According to all indications, it is clear that the world is heading fast towards a major energy crisis. It is estimated that at the present rate of consumption, the entire estimated range of recoverable oil in the world will be completely exhausted by the year 2015 or 2025.

The position in respect of coal in the world is also equally bad. In another 25 to 30 years, the coal mines would stop giving out coal. It will be a difficult situation. The developing countries of the world have already started looking for other sources of energy. Atomic energy, which promises a big hope, is full of risks and hazards. Moreover, atomic energy can be produced only at a very high cost. It has been calculated that nuclear construction costs are rising every day. They have now risen to 1000 dollars a kilowatt from one hundred dollars in 1960. Again, nuclear plants do not last forever. Their average life is 50 years. When they are dead, they cannot be dismantled like any other plant. They have to be buried deep and guarded forever. For these reasons, the world has to think twice before committing itself completely to nuclear power.

Scientists are now trying to harness solar, biogas, water, and air reserves. Water is being used in a big way to produce hydroelectric power at comparatively cheaper rates. Similarly, air mills are being developed in advanced countries of the world. Solar energy, too, has a bright future. Thermal generating units depending upon solar energy are being developed at a fast rate. Giant dishes are made to concentrate the sunlight on the thermal

generators which use this sunlight to produce energy. Animal and human wastes are also being rapidly exploited as a source of energy.

The position in respect of energy in India is not very discouraging. The production of oil in the country is fast increasing. It has doubled from 15 million tones to 30 million tones during the last five years. India is able to produce 60 percent of her needs but it cannot hope to be self-sufficient soon. India has already started harnessing sources other than oil and coal. But she can do so only with the constraints of the capital resources available to her. Thirty percent of the country's capital investment under the Seventh Plan was used for the energy sector. At present, we are paying a very high price for our petrol. Kerosene, the poor man's fuel, is rationed. Water pumps in the agricultural farms have no diesel, shortage of furnace oil is threatening the closure of several industries.

A few years ago, our oil experts were highly optimistic as they struck oil in the Bombay High wells, "We have hit the jackpot," said they. The ONGC authorities have discovered oil at a few more discovered oil fields. As the situation stands today, we are not producing enough while our consumption is increasing every week.

All this only means that our planners must rise to the occasion and evolve a national energy policy to make use of all the available sources so that the country is saved from a difficult situation and the sun. On the international field, the developed countries of the world must launch a massive program for harnessing all available sources of energy. They must also help the relatively less affluent countries to harness new sources of energy i.e. unconventional sources of energy.

Essay No. 02

Energy Crisis

God sent Adam with very few needs and strong limbs to fulfill those needs. As time passed and civilization advanced, man found himself more and more aloof from nature, lazy, luxurious, and dependent on machines. And machines required energy.

In the advanced world of today, the demand for energy is increasing day by day. We have machines and factories, buses, cars, trains, planes, ships, and submarines. Energy is required to run them. But this is not all. Man has become so lazy that he does not like even to wind his watch. So, energy is being used for running clocks and watches, typewriters, shaving razors, and many more things.

Wood was the first source of energy. Then came oil and passing through the stage of atomic energy, is now looking forward to solar energy.

We are naturally anxious because we know that a day may ultimately come when we have no more coal or oil. It will mean an energy crisis. People who have made careful calculations, feel that we will have used all available oil by the year 2025, and coal mines will also be empty in nearly thirty years. Man is on the lookout for other sources of energy. Our present hope seems to rest on nuclear power.

But nuclear power is full of many risks. It is very explosive. Accidents and mishaps in nuclear reactors are very hazardous. The radio-active waves from a nuclear plant that has broken down are a threat to man. Moreover, when a nuclear plant is dead after years it has to be buried and guarded forever.

The world would thus face an energy crisis. The condition of India is no better. The demand for energy in India is growing rapidly. It is estimated that if things continue at this rate, India will require four times of energy by the year 2010. The Government of India is taking steps to supply energy for non-commercial purposes from various sources such as bio-gas and quick-growing forest plantation but the rural poor are not able to pay the high cost of energy. Scientists all over the world are trying to meet the challenge. They are trying to harness solar, water, and air reserves.

Hydro-electric power is very cheaper, so the air mills are also cheaper. Solar energy has bright hopes for human beings. However, it is very expensive to establish the necessary infrastructure for tapping solar energy. Giant dishes are made to concentrate the sunlight on the thermal generators which use this sunlight to produce energy.

We shall have to make all possible efforts to save us from total darkness and helplessness. Scientists are doing their best to achieve this objective.